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Message Text

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 RSR-01 /098 W
---------- 127296
R 220745 Z MAY 73
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0967
INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY SUVA UNN
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
HICOMTERPACIS FOR LNO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 3 CANBERRA 2850

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: PP, PGOV
SUBJ: PAPUA NEW GUINEA: ROCKY ROAD TO SELF- GOVERNMENT

REF: A) CANBERRA A-58 B) CANBERRA A-40 C) CANBERRA A-280
D) STATE 086680

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: UNFORTUNATELY, EMBASSY HAS BEEN SHORT OF TRAVEL FUNDS FOR SOME TIME AND POLITICAL OFFICER VISIT TO PNG NOW POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT FISCAL YEAR. LAST POLITICAL OFFICER VISIT WAS IN JUNE, 1972. FOLLOWING REPORT, THEREFORE, BASED ON CONTINUING CONTACTS WITH GOA OFFICERS AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN PNG MATTERS AND ON PUBLISHED REPORTS AVAILABLE IN CANBERRA.

2. SUMMARY CONTINUED: CURRENT AUSTRALIAN ALP GOVERN- MENT SEEMS DETERMINED TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ACCELERATED PACE OF HANDING OVER CONTROL OF PNG GOVERNMENT TO INDIGENOUS ELECTED AND APPOINTED AUTHORITIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. MONTH OF DECEMBER 1973 FOR FORMAL TRANSFER
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OF FUNCTIONS CONNECTED WITH SELF- GOVERNMENT HAS IN PAST FEW MONTHS BECOME FIRM TIMING. MOREOVER, PRESSURE NOW BUILDING FOR FURTHER TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY, INCLUDING CONTROL OF MILITARY FORCES AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SEEMS

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DESTINED TO MAKE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN SELF- GOVERNMENT AND INDEPENDENCE MATTER OF MONTHS RATHER THAN YEARS. EXTERNAL TERRITORIES MINISTER MORRISON HAS PUBLICLY REFERRED TO INTERIM PERIOD AS ONE FROUGHT WITH AMBIGUITY FOR AUSTRALIA. HE STATES AUSTRALIA WILL IN THAT PERIOD BE IN POSITION OF HAVING RESPONSIBILITY UNDER U. N. TRUSTEESHIP FOR " LAW, ORDER AND GOOD GOVERNMENT" IN PNG WITHOUT HAVING AT SAME TIME EFFECTIVE CONTROL. IN THIS SITUATION, GOA WILL BE PUSHING FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR PNG SOON AFTER SELF- GOVERNMENT.

3. SUMMARY CONTINUED. FOR FIRST TIME IN PAST THREE YEARS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN ELECTED REPS OF PNG HOUSE AND GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA ON MATTERS CONNECTED WITH INDEPENDENCE, GOA WILL UNILATERALLY MOVE TO AMEND PAPUA NEW GUINEA ACT IN AUGUST SESSION OF AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT TO GRANT FURTHER AUTHORITY TO ELECTED PNG GOVERNMENT. WHILE EXTERNAL TERRITORIES SOURCES STATE AUSTRALIAN ACTION HAS APPROVAL OF PNG CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE, IT APPEARS THAT POWERS NOW EXERCISED BY AUSTRALIA WILL BE CAPABLE OF BEING HANDED OVER TO PNG FROM LEGAL POINT OF VIEW, RAPIDLY AND WITH LITTLE RECOURSE BY PAPUA NEW GUINEA GOVERNMENT. QUESTION OF WHETHER PRIOR U. N. TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL APPROVAL WILL BE NEEDED BEFORE INDEPENDENCE IS GRANTED TO PNG EXPECTED TO BE RAISED BY GOA- PNG DELEGATION AT FORTHCOMING TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL MEETING. TO WHAT EXTENT PNG GOVERNMENT WILL BE EQUIPPED PSYCHOLOGICALLY OR IN TERMS OF TRAINED PERSONNEL TO ASSUME THESE BURDENS IS LEFT UNANSWERED. AT A MINIMUM, A BREAKDOWN OF ADMINISTRATION COULD OCCUR. CRITICS OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE GOA' S UNSEEMLY HASTE TO DIVEST ITSELF OF RESPONSIBILITY IN PNG POINT OUT THAT CONTINUED GOA PRESSURE MAY PROVE TO BE TOO MUCH FOR FRAGILE COALITION GOVERNMENT IN PNG AND THAT THERE IS NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENT IN SIGHT. VOICES OF CAUTION, HOWEVER, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT OF AUSTRALIA, ARE IN THE DISTINCT MINORITY. END SUMMARY.
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4. PAPUA NEW GUINEA OBSERVERS IN CANBERRA HAVE BEEN WATCHING WITH KEEN INTEREST SERIES OF RECENT AND PROJECTED ACTIONS BY NEW ALP GOVERNMENT TO MORE RAPIDLY ON MATTER OF SELF- GOVERNMENT AND INDEPENDENCE FOR PNG. THEY SPECULATE THAT MOVEMENT WOULD BE SLOWER IF PREVIOUS LIBERAL- COUNTRY PARTY COALITION HAD WON LAST AUSTRALIAN ELECTION OR IF MORE CONSERVATIVE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN ELECTED IN PNG YEAR AGO. WHILE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL TERRITORIES HAS BEEN PLANNING FOR PNG TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT STATE FOR PAST THREE YEARS , EVEN THEY ARE SOMEWHAT OVERWHELMED BY PACE OF EVENTS UNDER AUSTRALIAN ALP GOVERNMENT. ORIGINAL TIMETABLE FOR INDEPENDENCE OF

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PNG IN 1976-79 TIMEFRAME HAS BEEN SHORTENED TO EXTENT
THAT MOST OBSERVERS NOW BELIEVE INDEPENDENCE WILL COME
IN 1974 AND THAT INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN SELF- GOVERNMENT
AND INDEPENDENCE WILL BE MEASURED IN MONTHS RATHER THAN
YEARS.

5. ONE OF PRIMARY REASONS FOR THIS BELIEF IS THAT
INTERIM PERIOD IS FRAUGHT WITH AMBIGUITY FOR AUSTRALIA.
GOA IN PARTICULAR IS CONCERNED ABOUT BEING RESPONSIBLE
FOR LAW AND ORDER IN PNG DURING THIS PERIOD WHEN IT MAY
NOT HAVE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OVER LOCAL SITUATION. ALREADY
SOME OF THE RENEWED TRIBAL FIGHTING IN THE CHIMBU
DISTRICT HAS BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO INDIVIDUAL TRIBES' DESIRE
TO GAIN CONTROL OF AS MUCH LAND AS POSSIBLE BEFORE SELF-
GOVERNMENT ARRIVES. BELIEF THAT INTERIM PERIOD WILL BE
SHORT HAS ALSO BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO PNG CHIEF MINISTER
SOMARE WHO IS SAID TO BELIEVE THAT WHEN PEOPLE IN PNG
SEE THAT SELF- GOVERNMENT BRINGS NO GREAT CHANGE TO
GOVERNMENT OF COUNTRY, THEY WILL BE READY TO ACCEPT
INDEPENDENCE. AT THE SAME TIME, AUSTRALIA IS VERY AWARE
OF ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER UN TRUSTEESHIP AND OFFICIALS
ARE WONDERING TO WHAT EXTENT GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE MAY
BE CONTINGENT UPON PRIOR APPROVAL OT TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL.
THEY MAY BE EXPECTED TO RAISE THIS MATTER DURING FORTH-
COMING MEETING. PNG REPS TO COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE
MINISTER OF FINANCE JULIUS CHAN AND MINISTER FOR WORKS
THOMAS KAVALI. SCHEDULED SITTING OF HOUSE OF ASSEMBLE
HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL THESE MINISTERS RETURN FROM NEW
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YORK.

6. DURING PAST YEAR, PNG GOVERNMENT HEADED BY SOMARE
HAS WEATHERED SOME DIFFICULT TIMES. DROUGHT AND THREAT
OF FAMINE OCCURRED IN HIGHLY- POPULATED HIGHLANDS LAST
OCTOBER, WITH AUSTRALIAN HELP WITH AIRLIFT, PNG GOVERN-
MENT PROVIDED REQUIRED AID. APPARENT LACK OF RESPECT
FOR CENTRAL AUTHORITY FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS OF THE
COUNTRY HAS ALSO OCCURRED. RESTIVENESS IN THE TROBRIAND
ISLANDS ; DISCUSSIONS TO WORK OUT SOME KIND OF AUTONOMY
FOR THE GAZELLE PENINSULA; AND AN ATTEMPT AT CONFRONTA-
TION IN BOUGAINVILLE DURING SOMARE' S VISIT THERE IN
DECEMBER, ALL PRESENTED CHALLENGES OF VARYING DEGREES
TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. IN PORT MORESBY, GOVERNMENT
COALITION PICKED UP A FEW EXTRA SUPPORTERS FROM FORMER
UNITED PARTY MEMBERS BUT IMPACT OF THESE DEFECTIONS IN
FAVOR OF GOVERNMENT APPEARS MINIMAL. LOCAL PUNDITS DO NOT
RULE OUT POSSIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVE GOVERNMENT TO SOMARE' S
BUT HAVE DIFFICULTY SEEING HOW GOVERNMENT LED BY
BASICALLY CONSERVATIVE UNITED PARTY COULD COPE WITH
RAPID AND APPARENTLY IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES NOW UNDERWAY.

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IN FACT, POSSIBILITY THAT A GO- SLOW, CONSERVATIVE GOVERN-
MENT COULD HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER PROCESS TOWARD INDE-
PENDENCE NOW THAT IT HAS BEGUN TO ROLL, IS HEAVILY DIS-
COUNTED. SOMARE' S GOVERNMENT HAS PROVEN TO BE QUIRE
STABLE, WITH NO DEFECTIONS FROM WITHIN ITS OWN RANKS,
AND APPEARS TO BE THE ODDS- ON FAVORITE TO LAST THE COURSE
TO INDEPENDENCE, AND THE NEXT ELECTION IN EARLY 1976.
CURRENT GOVERNMENT IS, HOWEVER, SUBJECT TO CONTINUED
STRESSES AND STRAINS OVER MAJOR MATTERS IN MONTHS AHEAD
SUCH AS TIMING FOR INDEPENDENCE . FRAGILE NATURE OF
CURRENT COALITION GOVERNMENT POINTED UP BY LEADER OF
NEW GUINEA NATIONAL PARTY, FINANCE MINISTER JULIUS CHAN,
WHO IS SUSPICIOUS OF AUSTRALIAN MOTIVES IN RAPID MOVE-
MENT TOWARD SELF- GOVERNMENT AND IS CONCERNED OVER
AUSTRALIA' S CONTINUED INTEREST IN WELFARE OF COUNTRY.

7. COMMON BELIEF AROUND CANBERRA IS THAT ALP MINISTERS
TAKE THE VIEW THAT PNG MUST LEARN TO STAND ON ITS OWN
TWO FEET. RECENT AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENTAL STATEMENTS
ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS
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INDICATE STRONG PROCLIVITY AMONG AUSTRALIAN MINISTERS
TO TREAT PNG GOVERMENT ALMOST AS IF IT ALREADY REPRESENTED
AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY. IN RCENT CASE OF ESTABLISHMENT

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NATIONAL AIRLINE FOR PNG, GOA MINISTERS APPLIED VERY
STRONG PRESSURE IN FORM OF PUBLICLY- MADE THREAT TO
WITHHOLD FUNDS AMOUNTING TO $50 MILLION FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND MAINTENANCE PNG AIRFIELDS IF PNG GOVERNMENT DID NOT
RECONSIDER PROPOSAL TO GIVE MANAGEMENT OF AIRLINE TO
PRIVATELY- OWNED ANSETT AIRLINES OF AUSTRALIA. COMPRO-
MISE NOW SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT THAT WILL ALLOW
THREE AUSTRALIAN COMPANIES, ANSETT, TAA AND QANTAS
TO PARTICIPATE EQUALLY WITH PNG IN MANAGEMENT OF PROPOSED
PNG AIRLINE, WITHPNG GOVERNMENT HOLDING 60 PERCENT OF EQUITY
SHARES. ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF ALP VIEWPOINT IS SPEECH OF
EXTERNAL TERRITORIES MINISTER TO WAIGANI SEMINAR IN PORT
MORESBY IN LATE APRIL ON PROVISION OF AUSTRALIAN DEVELOP-
MENT AID TO PNG. MORRISON EXPLAINED THAT GOA WOULD BE
PHASING OUT " AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE" ITS PROVISION OF
" ADMINISTRATIVE AID" TO PNG GOVERNMENT. INCREASINGLY,
HE SAID, AUSTRALIAN AID WOULD BE PRIMARILY FOR PROJECTS
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OVER WHICH THE GOA WOULD EXPECT TO EXERCISE CONSIDERABLE
CONTROL THROUGH VISITS OF AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS AND EXPERTS .
THE IDEA THAT GOA WOULD PROVIDE SOME " TURN- KEY" PROJECT
ASSISTANCE UNDER WHICH AUSTRALIA WOULD PROVIDE ALL OF THE
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUIRED FOR A PROJECT AND MAKE
USE OF LOCAL INPUTS TO A MINIMUM, HAS ALSO BEEN SURFACED.
IN SUM, GOA ATTITUDE TOWARD PNG IS REACHING STAGE WHERE
PNG BEING REGARDED AS A SEPARATE ENTITY, WITH VIEWS OF
ITS OWN SELF- INTEREST, AND WITH WHICH AUSTRALIA WILL
WANT TO MAINTAIN CLOSE BUT DISCRETE RELATIONS.

8. WITH CONSIDERABLE PRIDE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT,
MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL TERRITORIES MORRISON ANNOUNCED IN
AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT MAY 3 THE HANDING OVER OF ADDITIONAL
POWERS TO PNG GOVERNMENT. MORRISON SAID THAT PNG IS
IN IMPORTANT RESPECTS SELF- GOVERNING ALREADY AND LISTED
THOSE FUNCTIONS WHIKW ARE STILL IN AUSTRALIAN HANDS.
THESE ARE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE, CIVIL AVIATION,
PUBLIC SERVICE MATTERS AND CONTROL OF THE POLICE PARTICU-
LARLY. ALL OTHER PORTFOLIOS, HE INDICATED, HAD EITHER
BEEN HANDED OVER TO PNG OR WERE IN A CATEGORY WHERE THE
PNG OFFICIAL INVOLVED WAS RUNNING AFFAIRS ON A DAY- TO-
DAY BASIS, INCLUDING PARTICIPATION IN POLICY
DECISIONS, AND WHICH, HE IMPLIED, COULD BE HANDED OVER
BY THE GOA IN A SHORT TIME. MORRISON ALSO ANNOUNCED
THE FORMAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POSITION OF CHIEF
MINISTER FOR PNG, THE OFFICE HELD BY MICHAEL SOMARE
SINCE THE LAST ELECTION, AND THE ATTENDANT ESTABLISHMENT
OF A ADPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF MINISTER AND DEVELOPMENT
HEADED BY A MINISTER OF STATE, BOYAMO SALI. IN ADDITION,
MORRISON HAS ANNOUNCED THE INTENTION OF THE GOA TO
AMEND THE PAPUA NEW GUINEA ACT IN THE AUGUST SESSION OF

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THE AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT TO PROVIDE THE LEGAL BASIS
FOR HANDING OVER FUNCTIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE ON THE BASIS
OF THE PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT. IT SEEMS
CLEAR FROM ALL THESE PRONOUNCEMENTS THAT THE ALP GOVERN-
MENT IS DETERMINED TO PUSH AHEAD TOWARD INDEPENDENCE AS
RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE, WHETHER OR NOT PNG HAS
DEVELOPED A NEW CONSTITUTION.

9. ATTEMPTS BY LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS TO SLOW DOWN
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PACE OF MOVEMENT TOWARD INDEPENDENCE HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED.
LEADER OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN HOUSE, MATHIAS TO LIMAN,
WITHDREW HIS SIX MEMBERS FROMCONSTITUTIONAL PLANNING
COMMITTEE FOR THREE WEEKS IN MARCH UNTIL HIS DEMAND
FOR A PERMANENT EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO ASSIST HIS PARTY' S
(UNITED) LEADER, TEI ABAL, TO UNDERSTAND AND TAKE POSI-
TIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS, WAS MET. TO LIMAN WAS
ACCUSED BY SOMARE OF TRYING TO SLOW DOWN WORK OF COMMITTEE.
MOST RECENT CALL FOR SLOWDOWN, HOWEVER, WAS MADAYBY DE
FACTO CHAIRMAN OF CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE, FATHER JOHN
MOMIS, WHO ACCUSED AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OF PRESSURE TO
MOVE FORWARD WITH SELF- GOVERNMENT BYFORCING TALKS WITH
PNG LEADERS IN LATE APRIL. MORRISON' S ANNOUNCEMENTS GIVEN
ABOVE WERE MADE AFTER THESE TALKS. PART OF OVERALL
PROBLEM IS THAT CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE HAS MADE LITTLE
PROGRESS IN COMING TO GRIPS WITH OUTSTANDING QUESTION OF
HOW GOVERNMENT IS TO BE ORGANIZED. ANSWER ATTRIBUTED
TO PROFESSOR YASH GHAI, CONSULTANT TO U. N. LEGAL CENTER
IN NEW YORK, IS THAT PNG MIGHT NOT NEED A CONSTITUION
IN SHORT RUN ALTHOUGH ALL INDICATIONS ARE THAT LOCAL
POLITICIANS WANT ONE. CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE IS
SCHEDULED TO MAKE FIRST TRIP AROUND COUNTRY BEGINNING
IN LATE JULY TO TEST OPINION. LATER, SECOND TRIP MIGHT
ALSO BE NECESSARY . PROSPECTS FOR COMMITTEE TO HAVE
DEVISED CONSTITUTION IN TIME FOR POSSIBLE INDEPENDENCE
IN 1974 APPEAR VERY DIM.

10. ACCORDING TO LOCAL INFORMANTS, WORK OF
CONSTITUTIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE (CPC) HAS BEEN
HAMSTRUNG BY INTERECINE FIGHTS BETWEEN GROUPS OF
EXPATRIATE " ADVISORS" REPRESENTED IN THE MAIN BY TWO
FACTIONS, I. E. THOSE BELONGING TO THE CPC AND THOSE
ATTACHED TO THE CHIEF MINISTER' S OFFICE. THOSE IN THE
CPC ARE SAID TO BE MAINLY ACADEMICS WHOSE AIM IS TO
PRODUCE A CONSTITUTION OF SOME KIND NEXT YEAR ON WHICH
THEY WILL BE ABLE TO WRITE SCHOLARLY TREATISES. THE
GROUP IN THE CHIEF MINISTER' S OFFICE ARE DEPICTED AS
MORE REALISTIC IN THAT THEY DO NOW BELIEVE A CONSTI-
TUTION IS NECESSARY IN THE FIRST YEARS OF PNG' S INDE-
PENDENCE AND THAT A FORMAL CONSTITUTION CAN BE DEVELOPED

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FROM PRACTICE. IT APPEARS, MOREOVER, THAT EVEN IF A
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CONSTITUTION IS PROMULGATED NEXT YEAR, IT WILL NOT
NECESSARILY REFLECT THE ACTUAL GOVERNMENTAL SITUATION.
THE MAIN VIRTUE OF HAVING A CONSTITUTION OF COURSE IS
TO HAVE SPELLED OUT IN LEGAL FORM THE RESPECTIVE
FUNCTIONS AND JURISDICTIONS OF THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF
GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES .
THE LACK OF A CONSTITUTION, BY ITSELF, NEED NOT
NECESSARILY LEAD TO CONFLICT AMONG PARTS OF GOVERNMENT
AS LONG AS THE GOVERNMENT AS THEN CONSTITUTED IS ABLE TO
CONTINUE WITHOUT MAJOR INTERNAL CRISES. PNG HAS A
FUNCTIONING ADMINISTRATION, AN ELECTED HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,
MINISTERS WITH A CLAIM TO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF THE
COUNTRY, A LAW PROTECTING INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS PASSED IN
1971, AND A JUDICIAL SYSTEM WITH INDEPENDENT STATUS.
THE MAJOR QUESTION WHICH GOES BEGGING FOR AN ANSWER,
HOWEVER, CONTINUES TO BE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN SHOULD TWO
DISTINCT CASES OF A LAW AND ORDER PROBLEM OR TWO ATTEMPTS
AT SECESSION SHOULD OCCUR IN WIDELY SEPARATED PARTS
OF THE COUNTRY. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REF C), THE
POLICE RIOT SQUADS ARE NOT ABLE TO COPE WITH SUCH
SITUATIONS. THE LATEST PRONOUNCEMENT BY CHIEF MINISTER
SOMARE IN DECEMBER, 1972, SUGGESTS THE AUSTRALIAN
ARMY' S PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIMENT (PIR) WOULD BE CALLED
OUT ONLY AS A LAST RESORT TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER.

11. TALKS BETWEENPNG OFFICIALS, AUSTRALIAN ARMY
REPRESENTATIVES AND RANKING MEMBERS OF THE PIR ARE
TAKING PLACE IN PORT MORESBY AT THE PRESENT TIME.
WHILE IT IS FAIRLY CLEAR THAT THE PIR WILL HAVE TO BE
FORMALLY SEPARATED AT INDEPENDENCE FROM THE AUSTRALIAN
ARMY OF WHICH IT IS PRESENTLY A PART, THE
CONDITIONS OF SEPARATION ARE STILL BEING DISCUSSED.
AMONG THE CONDITIONS ARE THEMATTERS OF CONTINUED
AUSTRALIAN TRAINING SUPPORT, PERHAPS A WRITTEN ARRANGE-
MENT LINKING THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS, AND AUSTRALIAN
SUPPORT FOR MOVING THE PIR AROUND THE COUNTRY IN CASE
OF AN ULTIMATE EMEGENCY . AUSTRALIAN CONTROL OF THE
PIR WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE UNTIL INDEPENDENCE AND MAY
BE THE GOA' S ONLY CONTROL OF FORCE DURING THE INTERIM
PERIOD REFERRED TO ABOVE. JUST THE THREAT OF BEING ABLE
TO USE THE PIR IN A LAW AND ORDER ROLE MIGHT BE ENOUGH
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TO QUIET TENSE SITUATIONS. IT WOULD, HOWEVER, ALSO
RAISE PROBLEMS WITH THE POLICE WHO ARE AS JEALOUS OF

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THEIR PEROGATIVES AS THE MILITARYARE OF THEIRS. NO
DATE HAS YET BEEN SET FOR TURNING OVER CONTROL OF THE
POLICE TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES ALTHOUGH IT IS ANTICIPATED
THAT SUCH CONTROL WILL GO TO PNG BEFORE SELF- GOVERNMENT

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IN DECEMBER. SINCE THE 14 POLICE RIOTS SQUADS
FUNCTION AS A SEPARATE ENTITY, HOWEVER, IT IS POSSIBLE
THAT THE GOA COULD RETAIN CONTROL OF THESE SQUADS UNTIL
INDEPENDENCE AS AN ADDITIONAL MEASURE OF POWER DURING
THE INTERIM PERIOD. TO DO SO, HOWEVER, WOULD BE TO
IMPLY THAT THE PNG GOVERNMENTWAS NOT YET READY TO ASSUME
FULL AUTHORITY FOR INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND COULD BE
INTERPRETED AS A LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN THE CURRENT
GOVERNMENT BY THE GOA. THUS THE CONUNDRUM OF THE USE
OF POLICE POWER IN THE EVENT OF A NATIONAL EMERGENCY
REMAINS.

12. SPORADIC FIGHTING IN THE HIGHLANDS CONTINUES AS IN
THE PAST. WHILE SOME OF IT HAS BEEN LINKED TO MOVES
TOWARD SELF- GOVERNMENT AND INDEPENDENCE, MOST OF THE
FIGHTING APPEARS TO STEM FROM LOCAL ARGUMENTS OF A TRA-
DITIONAL KING. THE TWO SECESSIONIST AREAS, RABAUL AND
BOUGAINVILLE, HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET OVER THE PAST
YEAR. IN RABAUL, AUSTRALIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE GIVEN UP
ON THEIR PREVIOUSLY AGGRESSIVE ATTEMPTS TO RIGHT THE
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LAND SITUATION. A DELEGATION FROM THE NEW PNG GOVERNMENT VISITED RABAUL SOME SIX MONTHS AGO AND RECOMMENDED THAT THE THREE TOLAI FACTIONS SIT DOWN TO SORT OUT THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. THERE HAS BEEN NO NEWS, HOWEVER, THAT THE TOLAIS HAVE IN FACT DONE SO. AN INCIDENT AT THE PALM OIL PROJECT IN WEST NEW BRITAIN A FEW MONTHS AGO INVOLVED HIGHLANDERS AT THE PROJECT AND SOME LOCAL TRIBESMEN. POLICE RIOT SQUADS WERE SENT IN TO PATROL THE AREA. ON BOUGAINVILLE, THE MAIN PREOCCUPATION HAS BEEN TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO SQUEEZE THE COPPER COMPANY AT PANGUNA FOR MORE MONEY. POLITICIANS IN PORT MORESBY SUGGEST THAT PAPUA NEW GUINEA' S EQUITY HOLDINGS BE INCREASED FROM THE CURRENT 20 PERCENT TO ABOUT 52. PAUL LAPUN, MINISTER FOR MINES, HAS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE COMPANY GIVE HALF ITS PROFITS TO PNG. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, SOME CONTROVERSY HAS ARISEN OVER CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE' S APPOINTMENT OF LEO HANNET AS POLITICAL EDUCATION OFFICER THERE. HANNET IS A NATIVE OF BUKA, THE NORTHERN ISLAND IN THE GROUP, A FORMER SEMINARIAN, AND A PROFESSOR OF THE DRAMATIC ARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA. HE IS CONSIDERED TO BE IMPATIENT AND IMPETOUS AND HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THREE EXPATRIATES BE EXPELLED FROM PNG: THE PRESENT DISTRICT COMMISSIONER IN KIETA, THE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE BOUGAINVILLE COPPER PROJECT, AND AN ACTIVE POLEMICIST, BARRY MIDDLEMISS, HEAD OF THE SECESSIONIST NAPIDAKOE NAVITU ASSOCIATION. HANNET' S OWN VIEWS OF SECESSION HAVE BEEN AMBIGUOUS ALTHOUGH AS PART OF HIS NEW JOB, HE IS REPORTEDLY ORGANIZING A BOUGAINVILLE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE UNDER THE GUISE OF INFORMING THE PEOPLE ABOUT GOVERNMENT. FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT HANNET, IF HE SURVIVES, HAS MUCH LARGER EXPECTATIONS OF HIS OWN ROLE THAN AS A SIMPLE POLITICAL EDUCATION OFFICER. SOMARE' S RESPONSE THUS FAR TO HANNET' S SUGGESTIONS IS TO APPOINT DR. ALEXIS SEREI, AND INDIGENOUS MEMBER OF SOMARE' S PERSONAL STAFF, TO BE NEW DISTRICT COMMISSIONER IN BOUGAINVILLE, REPLACING AUSTRALIAN BILL BROWN.

13. IT IS DIFFICULT AT THIS TIME AND FROM THIS DISTANCE TO SEE WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA. GOVERNMENT COALITION SEEMS REPRESENTATIVE AND FAIR-

MINDED IN ITS EFFORTS TO DO THE BEST FOR PEOPLE AND HAS SHOWN MIXTURE OF STRENGTH AND MODERATION IN ITS ATTITUDES TOWARD POSSIBLE SECESSIONIST ACTIVITIES. AFTER SENDING RIOT SQUADS IN TO QUELL TROBRIAND ISLANDS DISTURBANCE, FOR EXAMPLE, CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE THEN EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR IDEA THAT ISLANDS MIGHT BECOME INDEPENDENT,

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THE CAUSE FOR THE DISTURBANCE. IN OTHER WORDS, WHILE
DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER, GOVERNMENT DOES
NOT MEET HEAD- ON THE CAUSES OF UNREST BUT PREFERS TO LET
TIME TAKE ITS COURSE. CHIEF VANIO OF TROBRIANDS IS UNDER
ORDER FOR ARREST FOR FOMENTING TROUBLE BUT NOBODY HAS
TAKEN TROUBLE TO FIND HIM IN ORDER TO ARREST HIM. AS
PART OF WHAT APPEARS TO BE LARGER PLAN FOR DE- CENTRALIZA-
TION OF GOVERNMENT, SOMARE ANNOUNCED IN FEBRUARY THAT
GOVERNMENTAL POWER WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED OVER TIME TO
LOCALLY- ELECTED AUTHORITIES WHO MAY ALSO BE GIVEN THE
POWER TO TAX. AT SAME TIME, SOMARE HAS TAKEN OVER
DISTRICT COMMISSIONER SYSTEM, THE " KIAP" SYSTEM, THROUGH
WHICH PORT MORESBY ABLE EXERCISE LAW AND ORDER CONTROL
OVER ENTIRE COUNTRY. POLICE OFFICIALS IN OUTLAYING PLACES
CONTINUE REPORT DIRECTLY TO HEADQUARTERS IN CAPITAL.
IF HE WERE ASKED WHETHER HE BELIEVES PNG WILL BE READY
FOR INDEPENDENCE IN 197 4, CHIEF MINISTER SOMARE WOULD NO
DOUBT PRIVATELY ANSWER YES. IN PUBLIC, HE WOULD PROBABLY
TEND TO HEDGE ON GROUNDS THAT MUCH MORE NEEDED TO BE DONE
BEFORE INDEPENDENCE AND THAT CONSTITUTIONAL PLANNING
COMMITTEE HAD JUST BEGUN ITS WORK.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CANBER02850
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730560/abqceeqa.tel
Line Count: 510
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 10
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) CANBERRA A-58 B) CANBERRA A-40 C) CANBERRA A-280 D) STATE 086680
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
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Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980225
Subject: PAPUA NEW GUINEA: ROCKY ROAD TO SELF- GOVERNMENT
TAGS: PGOV, PP
To: STATE INFO JAKARTA
SUVA UNN
WELLINGTON
HICOMTERPACIS FOR LNO
USUN N Y
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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